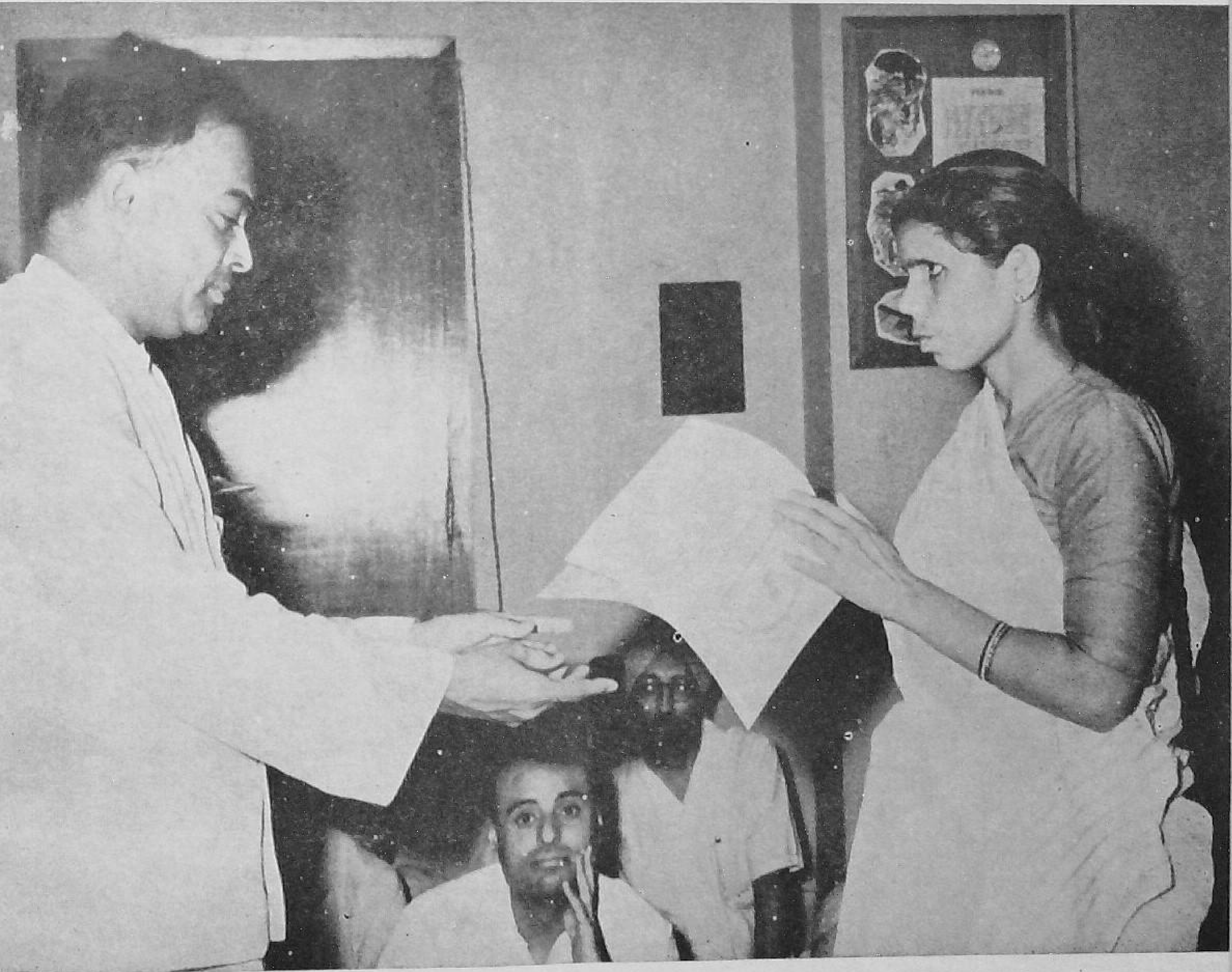
Panchayati Raj

NOVEMBER 1964



Smt. Kamla Avasthi *of Uttar Pradesh was adjudged to be the best Gram Sevika of the nation for the year 1964. She is receiving a merit certificate from Shri S. K. Dey, Minister for Community Development and Co-operation.*

A FISHERMEN'S CO-OPERATIVE IN ANDHRA PRADESH

A view of the section of the cold storage Plant where the fish are kept and preserved

The ice-plant cold storage being used by the fishermen's co-operative for the storage and preservation of the fish

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LETTERS

THE REALISTIC WAY

Sir,

WHILE THE move to reduce the V.L.W's burden of paper work is to be welcomed, it should be emphasised on him that he should not prepare the Village Production Plan sitting in his office otherwise it becomes just a paper plan. A correct and realistic Village Production Plan is possible only when every individual cultivator has been consulted so as to indicate his actual requirement of improved seeds, fertilisers and improved implements. As regards the actual implementation of the Village Production Plan, it would be advisable if the V.L.W. concentrates on a few selected progressive farmers rather than try to reach every cultivator family which may prove too much for him. The high standard of performance achieved on the fields of these progressive farmers will prove to be the best way of demonstrating to the rest of the cultivators the utility of various methods of improved farming. In course of time, all the agricultural families too will begin to follow the lead given by these progressive farmers. That is the only realistic way of tackling the problem of increased production.

Yours etc.
Rampat.

20-9-64
Village Nilothi,
ROHTAK

* * * * *

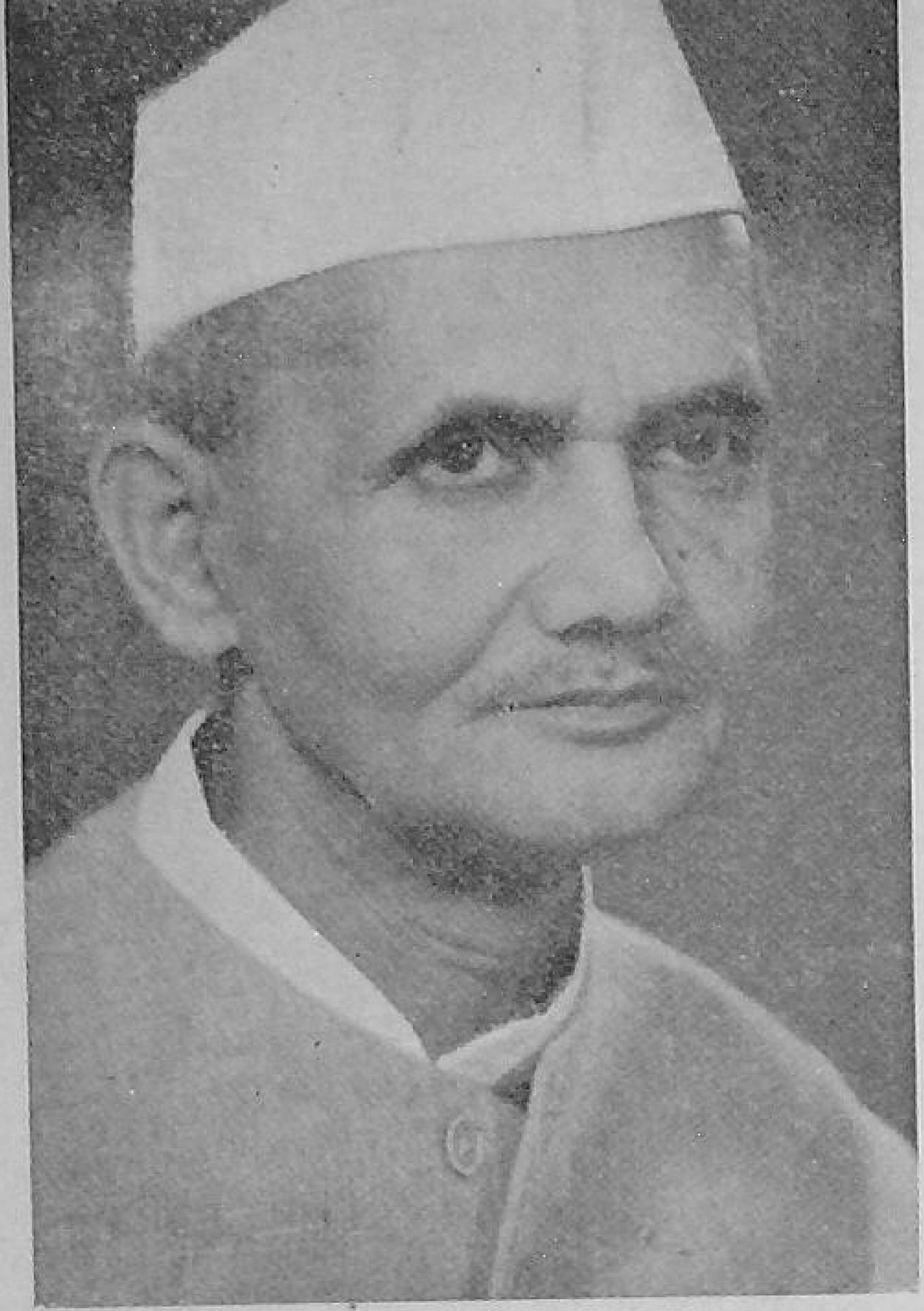
FINANCIAL SANCTIONS

Sir,

THE PRESENT system of according financial sanctions till 31st March is not conducive to the fulfilment of development schemes. More often than not, the sanctions which are generally received very late cut across the working season. This hampers the progress of development work. It should be ensured that the administrative sanctions are received fairly early, say within a month of the termination of the sanction period. Another provision which can be helpful is on the lines done by the Andhra Pradesh State Government, *viz.*, that the funds sanctioned do not lapse automatically on the 31st March but they are continued for 12 months from the date of issue of sanctions.

Yours etc.
B. G. Rao

30-9-64
Belgaum,
MYSORE



PRIME MINISTER'S APPEAL TO FARMERS

My brother Kisans: I am appealing tonight to the cultivators of India, to the three-hundred million of my countrymen, who live in six lakh villages and till over 350 million acres of agricultural land. I am appealing to them at this critical juncture to do everything possible to increase the output from their fields. There is no greater service that they can perform to their society, their people and their country.

You will know that the wealth of every nation depends on the production in its fields and in its factories. Even the production in the factories depends to a great extent on production in the fields. For instance, industries like cloth, sugar, etc., depend so completely on the supply of agricultural raw materials. To increase the wealth of a nation and to make it prosperous and strong—particularly a predominantly agricultural country like ours—become therefore the responsibility mainly of our Kisans and their shoulders are broad enough to take this burden.

With the coming of October, the sowing season will be starting in full swing. So much depends on what we do within the next few days. If we strive and if we labour, Mother Earth will not be found wanting in her bounty.

INCREASED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

During the last few years there has been some increase in agricultural production. During the First Five Year Plan, production went up by 17%, and during the Second by 20%. We had set a target of increasing production by 30% in the Third Plan. All the credit for this increase in production goes to our cultivators, who have laboured so much to bring it about. It is, however, unfortunate that this increase in production has not been to the extent that we had hoped, and the effect becomes still less when one considers the rapid increase in population. One of the difficulties has been natural calamities—excessive rains in some areas, lack of rains in others, frost, etc.—and the result has been that our production has been well below the Third Plan targets. But there is no reason to lose heart. None knows better than you that agriculture is a matter where a little increase and decrease is a phenomenon that one has always to be prepared for. But in the long run, Fortune smiles on those who strive and endeavour.

I believe firmly that the cultivators of this country have the strength and the capacity to make up the deficiencies even in one single season,—the coming Rabi season—and to give

a new direction to the country's economic progress.

My brother cultivators, when it comes to fields and agriculture, you know so much more than I do. In this appeal, therefore, I shall confine myself only to a few broad matters :

(i) Proper preparation of the fields plays an important part in the success of agriculture. We must use cow-dung and other compost and make the fields as productive as possible. There is no need for getting too many things from outside, and success will depend to a great extent on the efforts which you and your family members put in.

(ii) Use of improved seeds and improved manures and fertilizers to the maximum extent possible. Proper use of fertilizers does so much to increase output rapidly. It has also been seen that many cultivators use far too much seed. Research has shown that by use of less seed, sown in a proper manner, the production actually increases, especially as every plant is able to get sufficient space for nourishment.

(iii) In many parts of our country, the success of agriculture depends on irrigation. It is indeed a pity that not all areas have got the irrigation facilities they require; but wherever such facilities are available, we must put them to the maximum possible use. For instance, where canal water is available, we must have the field channels ready and also raise proper boundaries in our fields so that maximum use can be made of the water available. All this may seem rather trivial, but this is a matter of the utmost importance. I would urge you to give maximum attention to construction of masonry wells, tanks, and field channels etc., and this in itself will have a very rapid impact on increase in production.

(iv) There are many fields from which we can get two crops but are unable to do so. This is because ploughing and preparation of the field is not done in time, and so sowing is not possible. Our endeavour should be to see that there should be no single-cropped fields. By proper rotation of crops we can ensure that no agricultural land is left without a crop in any agricultural season.

(v) At a time when food shortage threatens us, the need is to go in for those crops that ripen early and give greater output. Whereas you can get about 25 to 30 maunds of wheat from an acre, from that same one acre you can grow three to four hundred maunds of potatoes, or 250 to 300 maunds of cauliflower and cabbage, tomatoes etc. We do need to give more emphasis to increase production of vegetables.

(vi) In this country, we have not also been able to use pesticides and improved agricultural implements to the extent necessary. This is one of the reasons why production lags behind. As soon as any crop is attacked by pest, we must use the proper insecticides, and for this you can get the necessary know-how from your Gram Sevak and other Development Officers.

MINIMUM PRICES

I believe you all know that we have decided to fix minimum prices for various agricultural commodities. This is being done to guarantee that the cultivator gets sufficient remuneration for the labour and investment put in by him. We shall ensure that you are properly remunerated, just as we propose to impose restrictions on those middlemen who tend to take away the greater part of the profits. In order to increase production in the coming Rabi season, you will have to invest in improved seeds, manures and fertilizers. The prices of Rabi crops will be so fixed that this investment will bring a sufficient return. In fact, it will always be our endeavour to ensure that our cultivators are properly rewarded for the commodities they produce, and which are so essential for the life of the community.

VILLAGE PANCHAYATS

In this vast country, we have set up once again the system of village Panchayats. These Panchayats can only come to their full flower-

ing in conditions of economic prosperity, and hence it is their first duty to do everything possible to increase agricultural production and thereby bring about that prosperity. It is this increase of production that is also now the principal challenge before the Community Development Movement, on which we have laid so much stress. If we have to import food indefinitely to feed our people and import raw material to run our industries, how can we ever hope to improve the economy of our country or raise the standard of living of our people?

CO-ORDINATION ESSENTIAL

For the success of the Rabi campaign it is of the utmost importance that there should be full co-ordination between the different departments who are concerned. It is equally essential that items like improved seeds, manures and fertilizers, improved implements, pesticides, irrigation facilities and agricultural loans should be available in proper measure at the appropriate time.

For the proper utilisation of these facilities, the Development Block, the Panchayat, the Co-operative Society, the Krishak Samaj, the Gram Sahayak and all other workers, who come into contact with the Kisan, have got to put their best foot forward and work with the utmost enthusiasm and devotion. For the Government servants particularly, especially, those serving in the districts and in the villages, this is indeed a wonderful opportunity for service to the country. They can share in the great task of providing food to their countrymen.

CONTACT WITH CULTIVATOR

When Gandhiji was our leader, the workers of the Congress used to go from village to village throughout the country and bring home to every individual the meaning and content of freedom. In this manner, they created enthusiasm wherever they went and built up a vast national movement. At this time of emergency, when a serious food crisis threatens us, the need of the time is that everyone of us, to whatever group or party he may belong, should enlist himself in this agricultural campaign and go once again from village to village enthusing the cultivators and helping them to resolve their difficulties. To bring the message of this campaign to every corner of India, to spread a new glow of awakening and enthusiasm in the hearts of our villagers, is truly today the greatest service of the Nation.

The monsoons are coming to an end and the month of October gives promise of the cool and pleasant season that is to come. This is a month of the greatest significance and the greatest effort for our cultivators. It is in this month that long before the break of day, you take up your plough and drive your bullocks and go into the fields and labour hard so that the soil becomes soft and fertile and productive. By the sweat of your brow you have to end this shortage of food and defeat want and poverty. Let the coming agricultural season, the new crop that is to be sown, mark a new turning point in our country's future.

In what words shall I appeal to every single peasant of this country to spare no effort of body, mind, wealth or labour, in the forthcoming Rabi sowings in order to make our country prosperous and strong? I would also earnestly request those who are the elected members of co-operative societies and of village panchayats and, in fact, all workers and volunteers, that in this time of difficulty they may stand shoulder to shoulder with their kisan brothers and build up a new and irresistible force on the agricultural front. Where there is courage and there is determination, can success ever be in doubt?

CAIRO CONFERENCE

Tomorrow is the auspicious occasion of Gandhi Jayanti and tomorrow, for the first time, I shall be going across the seas to another continent. In Cairo, the Capital city of United Arab Republic, will be assembling the Presidents and Prime Ministers and the Foreign Ministers of about 50 to 60 countries. They have one common objective before them—how best to save this world from the horrors of nuclear war and ensure the preservation of peace. Even from afar, my thoughts will be with this country, and at this moment of departure, I seek to take with me your good wishes and your blessings."

The speech was delivered on A.I.R. by Prime Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, on the eve of his departure to U.A.R. for attending the Conference of Non-aligned countries.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE SANTHALS OF BIHAR

B. M. PANDE

THIS IS the story of the tribal world of Litipara Block in the Santhal Pargana of Bihar. Historically, the traditional culture of the area started breaking down with the influx of non-Santhals who primarily entered the area for exploiting the economy and poverty of the aboriginals. With the advent of the money economy and the growing need of the people for currency the non-Santhals found a fertile ground for alluring them with an easy flow of loans at exorbitant rates of interest.

A NEW DIMENSION

The novelty of handling money and their increasing contacts with the outside world, hitherto non-accessible, gave a new dimension to their living. The introduction of Community Development programme through the setting up of a Block on 2nd October in 1960 for the first time afforded to the Santhals a machinery on which they could depend. This Block was later declared as a Tribal Block in April, 1964. The initial attitude of the Santhals towards the Block was one of suspicion and indecisiveness. The non-Santhal exploiters of trade and economy looked at it with distaste and anger, and launched an organised campaign creating all sorts of stories about the functioning of the Block. This opposition became more acute when cooperative loans started to be distributed and the non-Santhal money-lenders feared their very existence. Gradually however the tribals got attracted towards the cooperative loans little realising that, later, effective steps would be taken for their recovery. During the early stages of cooperative loaning certain amount of laxity in distribution was exercised without bothering too much about the realisation of dues. During 1962-63 the dues accumulated to Rs. 22,000. Since the luke-warm efforts at realisation did not bear fruit the Block agency had by now become aware of the problem confronting them regarding the realisation of dues. Non-realisation of dues was as much the result of the organised anti-cooperative campaign by the money-lenders as that of the inherent disinclination of the debtors to pay back the money. The Santhals took the governmental machinery for granted and the attitude of dependence on the cooperative loans was strengthened by the prevalent belief that the Block was a total welfare measure started by Independent India for doling out all sorts of help to the tribals.

THE RIGHT APPROACH

The non-realisation of dues had reached a stage of desperation and there was little hope left of any recoveries being effected. At this moment a young B.D.O. appeared on the scene in January, 1963. Shri P.N.S. Sarin belonged to the Bihar Civil Service and had undergone the routine administrative training at Ranchi. He had the experience of looking after a block in Dhanbad district and an intensive three months' training at Orientation and Study Centre, Bakshi-ka-Talab, Lucknow. Both these assignments helped him to cherish faith in extension methods and he felt wedded to the superiority of this approach. He made a special study of the problem of the recoveries of cooperative dues and went from door to door preaching the principles of cooperation and the existence of block machinery as an integral part of their community life. Wide-spread rapport on an individual basis was achieved throughout the block area. The Santhals became friendly with the block team and they started shunning the non-Santhal exploiters. The result was that within a year 94% of the dues were recovered and the Block was rated third in the district in this achievement. The Block was now well set on the road to development. It soon came to have 28 cooperative societies which distributed a loan of Rs. 47,000 during the last year out of which over 80% recovery of the dues has already been made. The membership of the cooperatives has almost doubled. This is a clear evidence of what can be achieved provided those incharge of the programme have faith in the extension technique.

FIVE HUNDRED STARVING FISHERMEN

NOW ON WAY TO PROSPERITY

(By a Correspondent)

THE FIVE hundred families of fishermen living around the 50 sq. miles of Nizam Sagar Lake in Andhra Pradesh, have shown how through the cooperative way of life, disappointment and defeat can be turned into hope and success. Not long ago, they were faced with the problem of dwindling income and starvation. With their primitive ways of netting fish, slow-moving transport and lack of facilities for scientific storage of their catch, they were struggling hard to make both ends meet. Their average per capita annual income was about Rs. 240 only. Little wonder that many of them were drowned in debt. Most of them were faced with the dismal prospect of starvation. So they began to leave their hearths and homes in search of 'pastures new'.

THE CO-OPERATIVE WAY

The Andhra Pradesh Government being moved by this sad plight of the fishermen undertook immediate steps to ameliorate their lot. In September, 1962 steps were taken to revitalize a defunct cooperative society of the fishermen. By the end of March, 1963 the memberships of the Society had gone gone up to 140. The Society was given requisite loans and grants-in-aid to enable its members to carry on fishing on scientific lines. The lake was stocked with fingerlings of those varieties of fish which could easily adapt themselves to the climate.

The dangerous rock on which the ship of prosperity of these poor fishermen had foundered in the past was lack of suitable storage facility for their fish. There were occasions when due to inadequate storage facilities the fish which they had netted after a good deal of hard labour, started rotting and had to be thrown back unceremoniously because these could not be transported in time to the markets. It was the installation of two cold storage plants each of 2 tons capacity and a 2 ton Ice Plant fitted with carrier equipment, the most modern in India and the first of its kind ever set up in Andhra by the State Fishery Department, that came to the rescue of the fishermen. The Plant which has a capacity to store 2 tons of fish at 30°F temperature was placed at the disposal of the society on rent. Besides the cold storage facilities the Government also made available to the Society facilities of fast-moving transport vehicles. As a result, the Society has been able to market all its catch and to derive the maximum profit. Little wonder that of late the fish has become an item of staple diet of the common man in Hyderabad and the surrounding areas. It is interesting to note that within a short period of six months, the Society has been able to sell fish worth more than Rs. 40,000. The Society is now planning to have its own storage facilities and transport vehicles. In the next few years to come, it will become one of the richest and most prosperous societies in this part of the country. Thanks to the co-operative soicety, the five hundred and odd fishermen will now be able to lead a life of comparative ease and prosperity.

Questions and Answers

Question : What are the essential features of the crop loan system? Which states have adopted it so far?

Answer : The essential features of the crop loan system are :

(i) the short term credit needs of each cultivator member of the society are determined chiefly with reference to the prevailing scales of production expenditure in respect of different crops and met in full subject to his repaying capacity;

(ii) the credit limits fixed are permitted to be drawn to the extent possible in kind and the balance in cash;

(iii) loans are made available on the basis of personal sureties and mortgage securities are not insisted upon;

(iv) attention is paid to seasonality in the timing of disbursement of credit and its recoveries, loans being provided in suitable instalments timed with reference to agricultural operations; and

(v) due dates for recoveries are fixed as near as possible to the periods when the major marketable crops of the majority of cultivators in the area are likely to be marketed.

The crop loan system has been introduced in all States (except J & K) in the package programme areas. So far as other areas are concerned, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madras and U.P. have made substantial progress in this line. While Andhra Pradesh, Mysore, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, Rajasthan have made a beginning in this direction, Assam, Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa, Punjab and J & K are yet to take up in right earnest.

Question : What is the Government policy regarding loans for agricultural production? What is the total amount of rural credit made available during the last three years?

Answer : As a result of the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Cooperative Credit, the policy regarding loans for agricultural production by cooperative societies has been liberalised. The amount of rural credit provided by primary agricultural credit societies, short term as well as medium term, during the last three years i.e. 1960-61, 1961-62 and 1962-63 is Rs. 202.75 crores; Rs. 228.31 crores and Rs. 251.90 crores (provisional) respectively.

Question : What is the total estimated annual credit requirements of agriculture in the country? Out of this how much is provided by the Government agencies?

Answer : The All India Rural Debt and Investment Survey (provisional estimates) of the Reserve Bank of India, 1961-62, indicates that the total borrowings of cultivating families in the country during 1961-62 were of the order of Rs. 1030 crores and those of all rural families of the order of Rs. 1230 crores. The exact amounts utilised for agriculture are not known. State Governments have given tacavi loans direct to cultivators for agricultural development of the order of Rs. 22 crores and Rs. 21 crores respectively in 1961-62 and 1962-63. Besides this, cooperatives advanced Rs. 244 crores in 1961-62 and Rs. 278 crores in 1962-63.

Question : What is the main consideration kept in view while undertaking the Intensive Agricultural Areas Programme?

Answer : One of the considerations is that intensive programmes of crop cultivation should be taken up in Blocks where there is assured water supply, i.e., assured irrigation or assured rainfall.

Question : What are the details of the scheme for outright purchases of agricultural produce from farmers by co-operative marketing societies?

(Continued on page 13)

MEET NATION'S BEST GRAM

By our Co

ON 30TH September and 1st October, the best Gram Sevaks and Gram Sevikas of various States had gathered together in Krishi Bhavan for the selection of the nation's best Gram Sevak and the best Gram Sevika. They were interviewed by a Selection Board set up by the Ministry of Community Development and Cooperation. Shri Bhagwan Singh and Smt. Kamla Avasthi, both from Uttar Pradesh were declared to be the Nation's best Gram Sevak and Gram Sevika respectively. Shri N. R. Patil from Madhya Pradesh was adjudged to be the second best Gram Sevak and Kumari Damayanti Behera from Orissa as the Second best Gram Sevika. At the Union Territories' level, Shri Ariankuppam and Smt. Shakuntala both from Pondicherry were adjudged to be the best Gram Sevak and Gram Sevika respectively.

Nation's best Gram Sevaks and Gram Sevikas. On the left of Co-operation is Shri Bhagwan Singh from Uttar Pradesh who h

DEY'S ADDRESS

At a simple ceremony befitting the occasion, the Minister for Community Development and Co-operation, Shri S. K. Dey, distributed the Merit Certificates to the winners. Krishi Bhavan has been the venue of numerous meetings and conferences in the past. But this one was with a difference. The Minister, the Deputy Minister and all other high officials of the Ministry sat on the ground along with the Gram Sevaks and Gram Sevikas.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, the Minister remarked that they had removed the chairs from the room and were squatting on the floor for to do so was in keeping with the rural atmosphere. In this connection, he recalled that the Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri had been laying stress on the fact that the officials working in the villages should wear the same type of dress as the villagers did. This helped to bring their identity closer to the rural people and promoted mutual understanding which was necessary for the success of the programme.

Referring to the problems standing in the way of increased agricultural production, Shri Dey said that a minimum reasonable price had to be assured to the farmer in order to give him the needed incentive for more production. The quantum of investment in the agricultural sector was required to be much larger than heretofore. The use of improved seeds, fertilizers and pesticides had also to be on an enormous scale. He added that the farmer also needed technical guidance of a higher order. Explaining this point, he said that the present day cultivator had made a marked progress during the last 12 years in so far as techniques of improved farming were concerned. He had come to realise the value of improved seeds, various types of fertilizers and pesticides. What he now needed was a more judicious and liberal supply of these essential

SEVAKS AND GRAM SEVIKAS

Correspondent

of Shri S. K. Dey, Minister for Community Development and has been adjudged to be the best Gram Sevak for the year 1963

commodities keeping in view the soil chemical tests and other agro-climatic conditions. Obviously, the Gram Sevak had also to be better equipped in so far as his technical competence and knowledge were concerned. He stood in need of training of a higher order. Concluding, the Minister remarked that much of the criticism against the extension agency had to be viewed in that light. If the student had come up to the level of the teacher and felt the need for a higher type of knowledge, it was a matter of credit to and not condemnation of the teacher.

Others who spoke on the occasion included Shri P. R. Chakraverti, M. P., and Shri M. S. Randhawa, Director General, Intensive Agricultural Areas. Shri Chakraverti who was one of the judges in the Selection Committee pointed out that his association with the best Gram Sevaks and Gram Sevikas at the time of their interview had confirmed him in his earlier belief that the Community Development was the most difficult programme in hand and that the heavy odds against which the people entrusted with its charge had to struggle required to be properly appreciated before any one attempted to make a sweeping condemnation of the programme as a whole. Often the critics did not know what they were doing, he added. Shri Randhawa made a forceful plea for higher technical skill being imparted to the Gram Sevak and for improving the position regarding supplies of fertilizers and pesticides in order to achieve the goal of increased agricultural production.

Earlier, Shri M. M. K. Wali, Deputy Secretary, while presenting the report of the Selection Committee pointed out that the Gram Sevaks and Gram Sevikas from the various states stood more or less on the same footing. They excelled in their own way and their comparison with each other was not an easy one. He disclosed that during the interview almost all the Gram Sevaks had pointed out that the technical supervision and guidance they received from above was far too inadequate.

NATION'S BEST GRAM SEVAK

Shri Bhagwan Singh from Uttar Pradesh who was declared to be nation's best Gram Sevak has had his headquarters at Chiraigaon near Varanasi. His main achievements are that the entire 1,830 acres of the cultivated areas in his circle are irrigated. All the 422 farming families of his area employ improved farming practices such as the use of improved seeds, fertilizers and pesticides. Almost every farmer has got 2 compost pits. Japanese method of paddy cultivation has been practised over 250 acres. As a result of all these efforts the agricultural production has been stepped up by 142 per cent during the year. Vegetable growing and fruit gardening have received a great fillip. Over 800 acres of

land is under vegetable cultivation. More than 1,500 fruit plants have been distributed during the year. As many as 105 villagers have taken to poultry farming as a subsidiary occupation. About 22,500 fingerlings have been stocked in tanks having a water area of 5.5 acres. All the villages under his charge have each got a co-operative society and about 89 per cent of the people are served thereby. There are no over-dues of these societies. The Panchayats and the Gram Sabhas hold their meetings regularly and participate actively in the development programmes. They have recovered 100 per cent panchayat taxes.

When asked as to how he had achieved such splendid results, Shri Bhagwan Singh replied that his technique always had been to catch hold of some villagers of progressive views and to persuade them to adopt the new improved techniques advocated by the department. Although at first these people hesitated, yet preservance yielded encouraging results in the end. The progressive farmers who adopted the improved farming techniques, invariably had amazingly good crops. This produced a very healthy effect on the neighbouring farmers who became converts without his having had to spend much time in convincing them. Such progressive people were the best extension agents of the programme, he said. Giving an example of the singular success of this technique, he pointed out how the family planning programme had become popular in that area which is known for its age-old orthodoxy and pseudo-religiousness. Till last year, nobody was prepared to undergo the vasectomy operation. But this year, with his persuation, two Brahmans came forward for the operation. Later on, they become the best *Pracharaks* of the programme so much so that 25 persons got themselves operated. Over 300 people now use contraceptives. When he was confronted with the poser that there was a feeling among the farmers that they did not get the technical assistance and guidance in adequate measure and that they now needed a better qualified person than the V.L.W., he immediately snapped back, "Sir, personally speaking, I would be only too happy for that is the measure of the success of the Gram Sevak in as much as he has completed his role of a teacher by having brought up the ordinary cultivator to a fairly high standard of technical competence. There should be provision for his higher technical training and for reorienting him to measure up to the new standards required of him".

SECOND BEST GRAM SEVIKA

Shri N. R. Patil who was adjudged the Second best Gram Sevak has served the village circle of Shahpur in district East Nimar, Madhya Pradesh. His area of operation is comparatively larger in as much as it consists of 13 villages with a cultivated area of about 14,000 acres and a population of over 10,000. His is a practically dry area since only 1,000 acres have got irrigation facilities which were brought about largely through the efforts of Shri Patil. Over 2,000 tons of fertilizers have been distributed amongst the farmers. Nearly, 400 acres have been brought under green manuring. About 500 improved agricultural implements have been introduced. As a result of all these measures, the agricultural output has increased by over 1,000 tons. 725 acres of land has been brought under vegetable cultivation and 5,000 fruit plants have been distributed amongst the villagers. An area of 127 acres which had been lying waste for a number of years has been brought under banana cultivation. The area being a cotton growing one, he has paid particular attention to cotton cultivation. More than 7,000 acres have been brought under what is known as 'Chauphulli' cultivation system. All his villages are served by cooperatives. About 80 per cent of the villagers are members of the cooperative societies. The Cooperatives have only 4 per cent of overdues from members. The Youth Clubs and Mahila Mandals of his area have been actively participating in development activities like digging of field channels, composting and spraying of insecticides on crops.

When interviewed as to how he succeeded in achieving such outstanding success in the various fields of development work, he replied that he first established contacts with the children and through them with their parents. He always gave priority to the felt-needs of the people. For instance, when a farmer once came to him seeking his help against the white ants which had been damaging the citrus plants, he got him the required insecticide and even demonstrated to him how that was to be used. It was this way of his working that brought him closer to the villagers

who began to cherish an implicit faith in him. The result was that whenever he placed any new schemes before them they adopted them unhesitatingly and that has been the secret of his success. He further said that the most successful extension technique was the actual demonstration of a good crop on the fields of the progressive farmers themselves. He narrated how he had once taken a group of farmers to a neighbouring village and showed them a prosperous crop which had been raised by following the improved farming practices. This had such a tremendous impact on the members of the group that on returning to the village several of them succeeded in growing a beautiful crop.

UNION TERRITORIES' BEST GRAM SEVIKA

At the Union Territories' level, Shri S. Lakshminarayanan working in the village circle of Ariankuppam in Pondicherry block was adjudged to be the best Gram Sevak. Almost the whole of the ten thousand and odd cultivated area of his circle is under irrigation. Over 9000 acres has been brought under improved seeds. Over 1500 tons of fertilizers have been distributed amongst 5000 farmers of his circle. Over 7000 acres have been brought under green manuring. Over 270 improved agricultural implements like the iron ploughs etc. have been introduced in the area for the first time. As a result of these measures, the agricultural output has gone up by 75 per cent. Over 12,000 fingerlings have been stocked in 60 tanks. All his villages are covered by Cooperative Societies which have no overdues from any of the members.

Throwing light on the extension strategy adopted by him in pushing ahead successfully the development schemes in his circle, he said that he had got cement boards fixed up at various places in the villages under his charge. He had got painted on these boards suitable slogans exhorting the cultivators to take to improved farming practices. He would also write on these boards useful information that was required to be passed on to them from time to time. He has taken special interest in making people literate. Through the Young Farmers' clubs and Night Schools he has succeeded in making 1000 persons literate in his circle. The Neo-literates take delight in reading for themselves the slogans and other useful information recorded on the cement Notice Boards.

BEST GRAM SEVIKA

Amongst the Gram Sevikas, it was Smt. Kamla Avasthi who though read upto VIIIth Class only and whom we might call a 'down-to-earth' village woman, had got the first place. She has been working in Nawabganj Block, District Unnao for one year and two months and has five villages in her jurisdiction, with a population of 3030 and about 460 homes. Her achievement has been spectacular in kitchen gardening and agriculture. She has saturated two villages with kitchen gardening and has achieved 100 per cent success in green roof campaign. She has almost replaced the Gram Sevak in as much as she has taken over his work in addition to her own like lifting of fertilizers, improved implements etc. She has also succeeded in improved methods of cultivation like Japanese method, line sowing, dibbling, transplanting of wheat, U.P. method of cultivation, green manure etc. There are 276 smokeless chulhas in her area. She has also done some work in poultry, fishery and piggery. Her work in applied nutrition is commendable as she has introduced a great variety of vegetable and sprouted grams, fruits etc. in the diet of the people. Home improvement and craft is also remarkable. The Yuvati Mangal Dals and Mahila Mandals in her circle are very active and they have also contributed Rs. 150 for the National Defence Fund and the girls have sent some woollen garments. Community and individual fruit gardening has been encouraged. When asked if she experienced any hestitation in doing the Gram Sevak's job amongst men, she replied without a moment's hesitation, "Certainly not, I have never considered myself to be a woman, as something inferior while working amongst men."

SECOND BEST GRAM SEVIKA

Kumari Damayanti Behera, the Second best Gram Sevika has worked in Nowarangpur Block for 2½ years. She has 11 villages in her jurisdiction and has a population of over 4000 with 923 homes to cover. She has done commendable work in agriculture and animal husbandry fields. She has succeeded in making most of the homes take up vegetable gardening. What is left over after their own consumption is given for the feeding programme of the vulnerable groups and the remaining stuff is sold. The sale proceeds are then deposited in the post office savings bank.

(Continued on page 13)

POULTRY DEVELOPMENT IN CHHATTISGARH

An adivasi boy proudly holding a pair of fowls of the improved variety

IN ORDER to help the cultivators to have some solid income through a subsidiary occupation as also to improve their standard of diet, the poultry development programme has been promoted on an intensive scale throughout the Chhattisgarh Division of Madhya Pradesh. The area covered comprises of Raipur, Durg and Bastar districts. Though Bastar is not classified under Chhattisgarh tract it has been treated as such for purposes of Poultry Development work. From the nutritional point of view, emphasis has been justifiably laid on poultry development for eggs not only provide the much-needed protein but they are singularly free from the evil effects of adulteration to which all other edible stuffs are amenable.

SUPPLY OF CHICKS

In the beginning, a number of factors had held up the progress of the scheme. There were not enough hatching eggs or chicks available for distribution. However, as the supply of day-old chicks on subsidy basis improved, the poultry development work gained momentum. The provision of suitable brooding equipments on subsidy basis to private poultry farmers encouraged the rearing of chicks on a large scale. When the scheme of supplying day-old chicks was introduced, people wondered whether it would at all be possible to rear day-old chicks under village conditions. This doubt was shared by the members of the staff of the department as well. But gradually the people gained confidence as they picked up the right method of rearing the chicks by providing them proper feed. Today there are several outstanding poultry farmers in Chhattisgarh region who would boldly and confidently come forward to invest thousands of rupees for purchase of day-old chicks and do a lucrative business out of this.

In Raipur Division alone about 48,000 chicks have been introduced during the last year. About 115 poultry farms having 100 to 1,000 birds have been set up in this Division during the last two years. With a loan of Rs. 103,000 recently sanctioned, another 59 units each having a minimum of 100 birds are going to be started shortly.

BACKYARD POULTRY FARMS

For people who cannot afford to take loan or invest money on their own, provision has been made for giving subsidy up to Rs. 101 to encour-

(*Continued on page 15*)

Healthy and well-developed birds at a Poultry Farm of one of the Adivasis of Anda village in Durg District

age them to start backyard Poultry Units. The establishment of backyard units and supplying of improved cocks are being done in a planned manner. For the present, the villages located within a radius of 5 miles from the Headquarters of a block or Veterinary Hospital or dispensary are being covered under the scheme. Cockrels are supplied to owners of backyard poultry farms at the rate of Rs. 3 each. During the last year alone more than 500 backyard poultry farms have been set up and about 6,000 cockrels distributed.

Steps have also been taken to effect upgrading of the local flocks with improved cocks on a mass scale. Effective steps have been taken against the spread of diseases amongst the birds. The Veterinary Department has carried out mass inoculation against Rinderpest, Ranikhet and Fowlpox. During the last year more than 70,000 birds have been vaccinated against Ranikhet and about 23,000 against fowlpox. Adequate steps have also been taken to safeguard the birds against worm infestation which is a great enemy of successful poultry development. Remedial measures for deworming the birds against round worms and tape are regularly carried out by the poultry breeders.

Provision of adequate marketing facilities has given a fillip to the movement. Regular collectors of eggs go round the village and market the same through poultry club, Raipur and District Poultry Unit, Raipur. The rates of eggs as well as birds are fixed so as to ensure a fair return to the poultry breeders and at the same time they are well within the reach of ordinary consumer, the average selling price of eggs being Re. 0.25 P.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(*Continued from page 7*)

Answer: The scheme will be introduced in 200 selected marketing societies in 1964-65 and another 300 societies in 1965-66. The scheme will be on a pilot basis for a period of three years. Selected marketing societies will undertake outright purchases of agricultural produce to meet losses, if any, arising out of this transaction. Every selected society will create a price fluctuation fund by allocating 10% of its annual net profit. Government will contribute @ 2% of the value of agricultural produce purchased under the scheme during the preceding year by the cooperatives. This contribution will be in respect of selected societies but will be kept in each State in an account with the State Cooperative Marketing Society. The scheme has been circulated to the State Governments for implementation.

Question: What is the impact of agricultural programme under the Third Five Year Plan on the Food production of the country?

Answer: Although the inputs in Agriculture e.g. consumption of chemical fertilisers, area under minor irrigation etc. are showing a steady increase from year to year, production of foodgrains during the last four years has fluctuated between 78 and 81 million tonnes. The main factor responsible for this situation has been adverse weather, affecting production in a country where less than one-fifth of the cropped area has assured irrigation facilities.

MEET NATION'S BEST GRAM SEVAKS

(*Continued from page 11*)

She has also succeeded in influencing groups of interested women to take up poultry breeding. Invariably the sale proceeds of the vegetables are used to finance this project. This is also a source of nutrition and extra income. She has done creditable work in the applied nutrition programme, health and sanitation. She has also introduced a number of home improvements and is a young woman of great enthusiasm and confidence. She has encouraged Mahila mandal members to take up various new improved methods and labour saving devices to rationalise their household duties.

UNION TERRITORIES' BEST GRAM SEVIKA

Smt. Shakuntala, the best Gram Sevika at the Union Territories level, has had 9 years' experience and has been working in Karaikal Coordinated Welfare Extension Project for nearly two years. She has 11 villages in her jurisdiction with over 17,000 population. She has done very good work with the Balwadis and Mahila Mandals. She has introduced poultry into 98 families. She has been very successful in introducing new practices in the diet pattern and has arranged a number of demonstrations for that. Her work in home improvement and crafts are highly commendable. She is running with great success the mid-day meal programme which is financed by funds drawn from the Welfare Board and some local help.

GRAM SEVAK & THE PANCHAYAT

B. S. Someswaraiah

Babu Rao : Hullo, Gram Sevak ! How is it that you are staying at home today and not going to any village ?

Gram Sevak : Namaste, Babu Raoji. I am going through the Mysore Panchayati Raj Bill and also I have to prepare the agricultural plans for being submitted to office.

Babu Rao : What was the necessity of amending the present Panchayati Raj Act ? The Panchayats have already got fully settled to their business.

Gram Sevak : The working of the old Panchayati Raj Act had shown that it lacked in certain respects as compared to similar Acts passed by other State Governments. A Committee was set up by the State Government to go into the matter and to suggest the improvements. The present bill is based on the findings of that Committee.

Babu Rao : Why do you worry about all these things ? Why do you attend the meeting of the Panchayat at all ? There are already two factions in the Panchayat and you have to waste lot of your time and energy in resolving their differences. You better look to your own work. After all you are not a member and you have no power over the Panchayat.

Gram Sevak : No ! No ! It is not like that. I attend the meetings not with any sense of authority but as a friend and guide. I go there to see that the Panchayat functions on sound lines. The pace of development programme is speeded up if the Panchayat is active and efficient. You know that the Government has made it obligatory for the Panchayats to serve a copy of the agenda on the Gram Sevak. . Though they are not entitled to vote they are expected to guide the members in their deliberations.

Babu Rao : How do you know the pros and cons of the subjects to be discussed ? How is it possible for you to assist the opposing groups to come to an amicable solution ?

Gram Sevak : Immediately on receipt of the agenda of the meeting I visit the Village Panchayat Office and discuss the same with the Secretary and the Chairman. I have made it a point to call upon the Village Panchayat members and discuss with them all my programmes at the end of the day's work. Incidentally, the agenda is also discussed and thus the members are enlightened about the various issues involved.

Babu Rao : Do you contact both parties ?

Gram Sevak : Of course, I contact all the members irrespective of caste or party label.

Babu Rao : But what can you do when they have got so much hatred and suspicion against each other ?

Gram Sevak : With patience and right approach even this difficulty is overcome. But we must have faith in Man.

Babu Rao : Oh ! You are talking tall philosophy.

Gram Sevak : Nothing doing; one can cultivate such a way of thinking. Let us come to the subject. Suppose the members come to the meeting one or two hours late. I always impress upon them about the necessity of being punctual. I try to drive home to them the idea of punctuality by giving them the examples of great people. Consequently they begin to attend the meeting punctually.

Babu Rao: But how do you help the Panches to come to a correct decision ?

Gram Sevak : I listen to the arguments of both sides. Without affiliating myself with either group I give my frank opinion supported by arguments as to what should be the correct course in the prevailing circumstances. In this way they come to an agreed decision.

Babu Rao : But do they not consider it an interference in their work ?

Gram Sevak : I do not impose myself on them. I speak only when they want me to speak. I have got no authority over them. But I conduct myself in a way that they value my service and guidance offered to them.

Babu Rao : But what about the other Government functionaries? Do they not regard you as an interloper in their spheres?

Gram Sevak : There again I do not work in a way to reduce the authority or responsibility of other development officials. I only assist them and not interfere in their working. You see this book in my hand. This deals with the Budget and Account Rules of Village Panchayats. I have gone through it and I help the Secretary in preparing the budget. Strictly speaking, it is none of my job to do that. Yet I do so keeping in view the fact that preparation of budget on right lines is very important for the sound administration of the Village Panchayats. Not only this, I discuss with them about inspection reports, audit reports, administration reports and all such matters.

Babu Rao : So you do quite a lot of Village Panchayat work. I think they can do away with the Secretary.

Gram Sevak : No; No; it is not like that. After all, what I do is by way of guidance and it is the Secretary who does the work himself. Anybody initially requires guidance. If I put them on the track in the beginning, they will function well afterwards. If all the panchayats in my circle function well, the pace of development work is speeded up. Is it not?

Babu Rao : Yes. Do you help the Secretary in Tax collection also?

Gram Sevak : Not exactly. But as I go out and meet farmers and important leaders frequently in connection with my regular work, I tell them the importance of Panchayati Raj in the context of democracy at large and the responsibility of individuals in Panchayati Raj; the necessity of proper payment of Village Panchayat taxes to keep the Village Panchayat functioning properly. If the Secretary happens to come to that village for collection work, I spend some time with him to facilitate his collection work.

Babu Rao : You seem to be doing everything and everywhere. How do you get all the information you need?

Gram Sevak : Every month the entire staff of our block meets when not only our common problems are discussed but important information regarding the programme received from the Government are conveyed to us. The B.D.O. and the various Extension Officers tell us in details about what we are required to do in various spheres. Besides, we discuss our field problems with the B.D.O. and the Extension Staff when they come on tour.

Babu Rao : Does not your Village Panchayat work hamper your main work of increasing agricultural production?

Gram Sevak : Not at all. On the other hand, it becomes easy for me. My discussion leads them to think; at first the Chairman takes the lead in accepting the programme. Then other people follow suit. In this way my work becomes easy.

Babu Rao : To do all these things, it requires a great deal of patience and professional competence.

Gram Sevak : Yes, Mr. Rao. The job is veritably a great school of patience and perseverance. Though I think it does not require any high mental calibre, it requires a strong determination and willingness to do one's job sincerely and well.

Babu Rao : Thank you, Sir. If there were so much of guidance available even an illiterate person like myself can work as a Village Panchayat Chairman.

Gram Sevak : Literacy is not essential for the work of a Village Panchayat Chairman. It is the will to do good to one's own fellow villagers that is required. All right, thank you. Good bye!

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AROUND THE STATES

UTTAR PRADESH

Poultry Development Programme Stepped up

IN VIEW of the considerably increased demand for poultry birds and one-day-old chicks, the Animal Husbandry Department has made adequate arrangements for their supply to the people and for vaccination. Various poultry institutions in the State have been expanded, both at the State and district levels, and large-scale poultry production programmes have been taken up. The chicks and birds from these farms are supplied at very nominal rates, 75 paise for one-day-old chick, a price which is the lowest in the country and Rs. 3 for a two-month-old bird. The day-old chicks are vaccinated against Ranikhet disease before supply. But when they are six weeks old they have to be revaccinated against Fowl Pox and Ranikhet disease. This is done in the districts by the field staff. In most of the districts a date has also been fixed for Ranikhet vaccination. Breeders are required to get their birds vaccinated on that date.

Subsidy on Agricultural Implements

THE STATE Government have decided to restore subsidy on all individual agricultural implements costing more than Rs. 20 but not more than Rs. 400. The rate of subsidy will be 20 per cent for individual purchasers and 33 per cent for institutions. The subsidy will be given out of the Block budget for the current financial year only and its continuation thereafter will be reconsidered.

In April last the Government had decided not to allow subsidy on agricultural implements costing less than Rs. 100. It was represented that this was likely to retard the programme of distribution of improved implements. The subsidy has now again been liberalised.

MAHARASHTRA

Awards for Sterilisation Operations

THE GOVERNMENT of Maharashtra has accorded sanction to the non-recurring expenditure not exceeding Rs. 10,000 for purchase of 25 permanent shields, one for each district. The Government has also accorded sanction to a recurring expenditure of Rs. 2,500 per year for purchase of three cups for each district to be awarded to the village panchayats in the district, showing the first, the second and the third performance in the number of sterilisation operations, during the year. The shields and the cups are to be awarded to panchayat samitis and village panchayats, respectively for the best performance in the number of sterilisation during the year. For being eligible to the awards of the shields or the cups, the village panchayats of the district have to perform a minimum of 50 operations during the year. The rate of the sterilisation per 1,000 population (of 1961 census) will be the basis for deciding which Samiti had done the best work; and the shields are to be given to samitis, non-municipal areas where panchayats are functioning. The figures of sterilisations in towns above 20,000 will not be considered while awarding the prizes. The general body of the zilla parishads will declare the prizes on the recommendations of the Health Sub-Committee and the figures of sterilisations are to be collected by the public Health Officer.

MYSORE

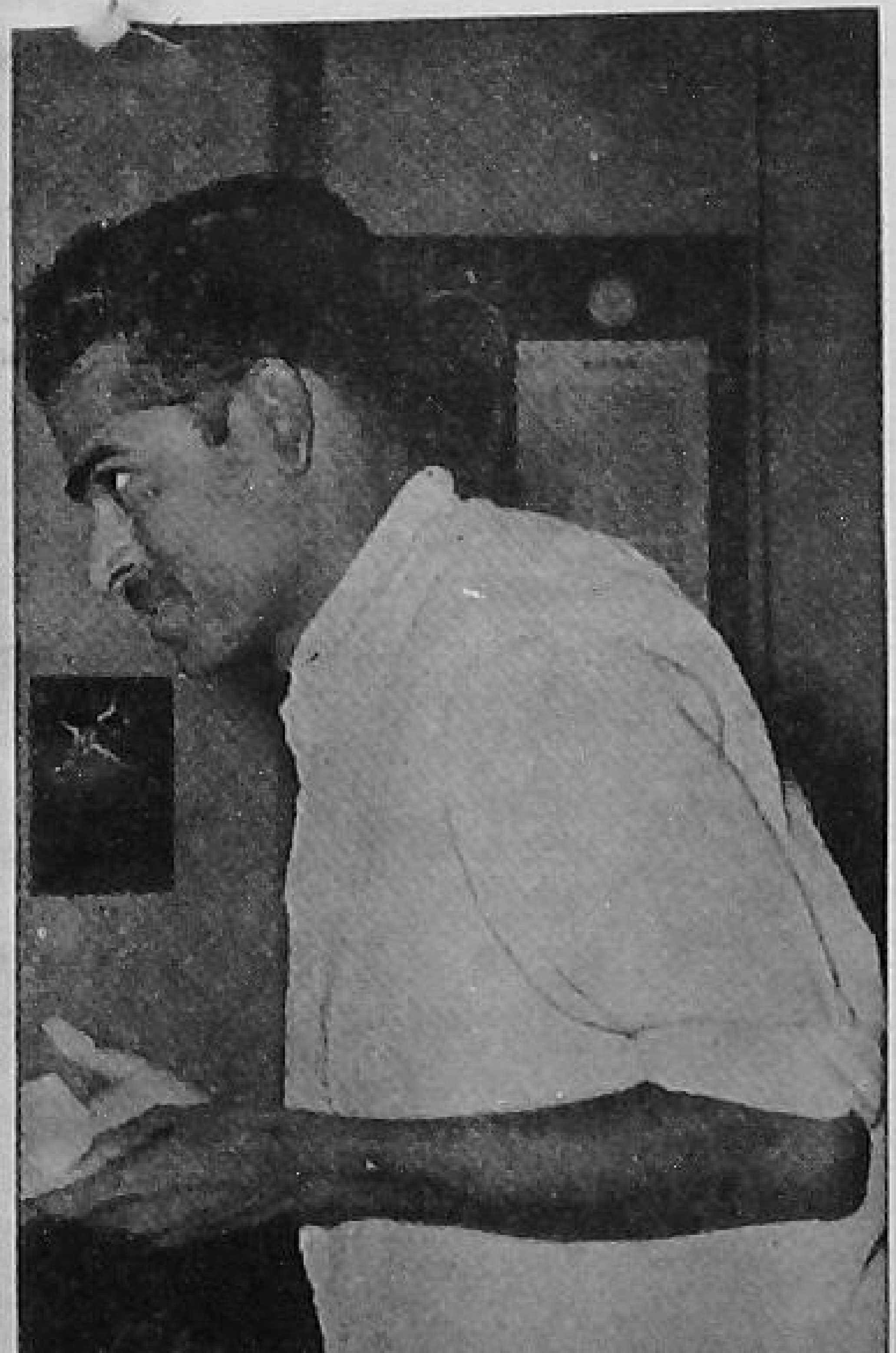
Transfer of Fishery Rights to Village Panchayats

IN PURSUANCE of the recommendations made by the National Conference on Community Development held at Mount Abu and Mysore, the State Government have transferred to the village Panchayats the fishery rights of the minor tanks in the old Mysore State and tanks with a maximum water spread area of 25 acres and less in the merged areas of Bombay, Hyderabad, Madras, Coorg States and Bellary District.

Our Best Workers

Shri N. R. Patil of village
Shahpur in District East N
Madhya Pradesh has
adjudged to be the na
second best Gram Sev

Kumari Damyanti Bahera has been adjudged to be the Second best Gram Sevika at a national level competition held recently in New Delhi



Shri S. Lakshminarayan of Pondicherry has been adjudged to be the best Gram Sevak at the Union Territories level

A Banjhara virgin in her queer head gear and distinctive costume

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